

Remarks

With the addition of claims 29 and 30, claims 15-30 are now pending in the above-referenced application. Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 19, 21, 22, and 27 include allowable subject matter. Before turning to the merits of this Office Action, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider his refusal to consider the Information Disclosure Statement submitted with the national stage application papers. In the Office Action, the Examiner states that the IDS fails to comply with Rule 1.98(a)(1), which states that any IDS must contain a list of all patents, publications, applications, or other information submitted for consideration by the patent office. The IDS that Applicants submitted did contain such a list. As proof of this submission, Applicants attach hereto a copy of the stamped postcard receipt and also a courtesy copy of the PTO Form 1449 that accompanied this IDS. As the Examiner will see, the postcard receipt states that the PTO Form 1449 and reference copies were submitted. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner initial and return the attached PTO Form 1449 in the next communication from the Patent Office.

Claims 15-18, 20, 23-26, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,745,870 to Yamamoto et al. ("Yamamoto"). Applicants respectfully disagree with this rejection because Yamamoto does not teach or even suggest projecting the course path of at least one second vehicle traveling ahead in a direction of a position of the first vehicle. Claim 15 recites a first vehicle and at least one second vehicle. The first vehicle is recited as being equipped or associated with a distance sensor, and the purpose of the claimed invention, as articulated in the preamble, is to determine a future travel-path of the first vehicle. In doing so, the claimed invention projects the course path of the at least one second vehicle traveling ahead in a direction of the position of the first vehicle. Yamamoto does nothing of the kind. In Yamamoto, "a stationary object positioned in front of the vehicle is detected, and a traveling path on which the vehicle path will run, is predicted." Column 7, lines 34-37. Moreover, in Yamamoto "the second traveling-path prediction device predicts a traveling-path based on a velocity, a steering angle, etc. If there is no stationary object in front of the vehicle, a traveling

path predicted by the second traveling-path prediction device can be utilized.”

Column 7, lines 43-47. Yamamoto is thus capable of predicting multiple traveling-paths, but unlike the claimed invention, which determines and projects travel paths not only for the vehicle containing the distance sensor, but also the travel path of other vehicles (i.e., the at least one second vehicle) that are detected on the road, the multiple traveling-paths in Yamamoto are traveling-paths of the same vehicle. That is, the traveling-path based on a detected stationary object and the traveling path based on a detected moving object in Yamamoto represent alternative paths for the same vehicle. This is unlike the claimed invention, which projects a path for a vehicle other than the one that is actually performing the travel-path determination. To further illustrate this distinction between the claimed invention and Yamamoto, Applicants direct the attention of the Examiner to Figure 7 of the instant application, in particular to projected course path 710a, as an exemplary instance of the manner in which the claimed invention operates. The claimed invention, which is embodied as a system and method operating in vehicle 700, not only detects the location of a vehicle traveling ahead 703, but it also projects the path of that vehicle 703 in the direction of the vehicle 700, this projection being illustrated as the dotted line 710a that extends from the detected position 708a of the vehicle 703 to a prior position of vehicle 703 that is in the lane adjacent to the vehicle 700. An advantage of this feature, which is absent in Yamamoto, is that the vehicle 700 can calculate the transverse displacement between itself and vehicle 703 more quickly, since the vehicle 700 does not need to wait until it actually is adjacent to the detected position of vehicle 703 before performing the transverse displacement calculation.

Based on this discussion, Applicants submit that claims 15 and 28 are patentable over Yamamoto. As for claims 16-18, 20, and 23-26, Applicants submit that these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons given in support of the patentability of claim 15.

Applicants have added new claims 29 and 30. Claim 29 recites that the projected course path of the at least one second vehicle is substantially parallel to a current path of the first vehicle. Claim 30 recites that a current path of the first vehicle is within a first lane of a road and the projected course path of the at least one second vehicle is contained in a second lane of the road. Support for these new claims is found at least in Figure 7. Applicants submit that these claims are patentable over the prior art relied on by the Examiner.

Applicants assert that the present invention is new, non-obvious, and useful. Consideration and allowance of the claims are requested.

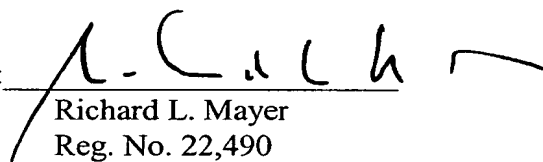
Respectfully submitted,

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Dated:

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